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Narrative Writing Rough Draft

## Khali and the Red Prison

When Khali was younger, 5 years old to be exact, she and all the other 5 year olds in the gloomy, City of Rain had been inducted into the H.O.P.E program aka Helping Others for a Peaceful Existence. It wasn't as happy as it sounded. When it had started it wasn't so bad. She and her peers had helped organize pencils, letters, and numbers, eventually learning words and how to speak. Khali had found it utterly fascinating. But as the years progressed it had eventually become harder and harder work to the point where when she had turned 11 years old, she had been introduced to the mining.

She and everyone else were forced day after day to go and mine for graphite, and the hard to find words and numbers found deep in the already torn up and poisoned earth. It had been 6 years of that now and the constant labor had toughened her small frame into hard muscle. They all had been transferred to the Red Prison at age 14 and thrown deep into the giant holes. The Red Prison was just that, literally a giant red brick prison where everyone worked for what seemed like a slow moving eternity 5 days a week. On the weekends they teenagers were allowed to go home and visit their families but had to go back to the prison bright and early on Monday morning.

"I've had enough of this!" Khali exclaimed as she threw down her pick axe and swept the red strands of her hair that had managed to escape her long ponytail, off her face. "I mean come on Eve, haven't you?"

Her friend Eve looked up from the hole in the wall that she had been picking away at and swiped unsuccessfully at the layers of grime on face. "Hey, come on. We'll get out of here eventually. Anyway stop worrying, it is your 17 birthday after all."

"You two! Stop talking! Khali get over here. Warden Simms needs to talk to you!" Khali looked up to see one of the guards standing at the gate leading out of the mines. She looked at Eve in confusion then set down her pick axe and walked over. The Warden almost never talked to any of the inmates.

It was a long and particularly awkward elevator ride up, out of the depths of the earth, to the surface above, and beyond that to the Warden's office. Finally after what seemed like forever, the elevator finally came to a lurching stop and the door slowly slide open. Khali gingerly stepped out and in to the huge office.

"Welcome Khali," said the Warden, a tall dark-haired man who sat behind the desk in front of her. "You're probably wondering why I asked you to come up here to talk to me. I understand that today you are turning 17."

"Yeah, so what?" Khali replied.

"Well you know how everyone who wants to be leave and go out and explore the world beyond has to go through a test, don't you?"

"Everyone does"

"Well because you are 17 now, it is your turn to make a choice, do you want to stay here, or do you want to leave?"

"What do you think? Obviously I want to escape from this hell hole."

"Very well then Ms.Brookstone, then in one month's time, you will have to fight the beast."

"Wait, what!? That's not you said!" Khali cried

Warden Simms smirked. "I said everyone had to pass a test, that is the test. So, do you still want to try?"

Khali stayed quiet, considering. On one hand, she had the chance to finally escape, something she had been dreaming about for years. On the other hand, well obviously, she could get killed. Finally she looked up and starred the Warden dead in the eyes.

"Yes, I do."

Over the next month, Khali worked harder than she ever had. Every day, along with the usual ritual of mining and working, she had training sessions that lasted until the sun had set and the moon had taken its place in the sky. Every night she went to bed exhausted only to rise early in the morning to go and work, starting the horrid cycle over again. Her body got stronger, her reflexes faster, and her mind sharper. She realized that even though she absolutely loathed the hours spent working at the Red Prison, it had actually prepared her for this day. All of the labor had made her strong.

Before Khali knew it a month had passed and her test day had arrived. On the morning of she woke up, sick to her stomach with nerves. When she got to the Red Prison, she was escorted to a large room, and the door was shut behind her. She surveyed her surroundings. She noticed a large metal gate opposite her and a sword of what seemed to be graphite lying on the floor. She stepped toward it but just as she did, the voice of the Warden came crackling over a loudspeaker.

"Ms.Brookstone, you have chosen to fight the beast in an effort to be released. You will not be permitted to leave this room until the test is over. Meaning you have either killed the beast, or failed."

“By “failed” I suppose you mean killed, right?” Khali yelled.

“Correct. Goodbye.” And the speaker clicked as the Warden signed off.

With those uplifting words, Khali started toward the sword again. Then a loud creaking, screeching, and grinding echoed through the room as the large gate across the room slowly opened. Out of it sprang, well, a beast. It was huge and white with a swirling coat of what seemed to be ever changing numbers and letters, moving around and confusing her. Before Khali knew what was happening, it lunged at her. Instinctively she ducked and rolled to side out of the way, as the beasts huge claws scrapped the stone ground, ripping up chunks of it right where she had been a moment before. It whirled around toward her with an angry roar. Khali looked around desperately for sword and spotted it across the room, with the beast right in-between.

The beast lunged at her again and this time Khali ran forward and slide right under it. But one of its claws scratched a deep cut on her left arm from her elbow all the way up to her shoulder. She screamed out in pain, but managed to get up, run toward the sword and pick it up. Holding it out with her right arm, her left cradled against her, Khali swung around toward the beast. They circled each other, each looking for an opening. Then the beast lunged at her. She stepped to the side and slashed a long cut the length of its side. The beast howled, more in rage than in pain, seeing that it had the mass of a large elephant. It lifted a huge paw and slashed down at her and she parried with her sword. She stepped forward and thrust, but the beast dodged it and they started circling each other again.

This time Khali attacked first, running forward and leaping up into the air, pushing off the ground with all of her might and landing on the beasts back. It swung around and around, trying to shake her off, but she held on tight. The beast roared in frustration. Then Khali thrust down her sword with all the power she could muster. All the frustration of the

labor, the never ending work, the late nights and early mornings of the past 7 years boiled up inside her and she plunged the sword down into the beasts head. It let a final, blood-curdling roar than collapsed to the ground, still, silent, and dead.

Khali slid of the beasts back and almost collapsed to the ground in relief. It was over. It was finally over.

“Well,” she heard the Wardens voice blare. “It looked like you survived after all.”

Khali smiled.

THE END